DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 380 679 CE 068 672

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TITLE Essential Communication and Documentation Skills. Module: Observation Skills.
INSTITUTION State Univ. of New York, Albany. Rockefeller Coll.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC. National Workplace Literacy Program.
PUB DATE Jul 94
NOTE 72p.; For related documents, see CE 068 670-680. Contains photographs that will not reproduce well.
AVAILABLE FROM Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program, Professional Development Program, State University of New York at Albany, Richardson Hall, Room 381, 135 Western Avenue, Albany, NY 12222.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; Basic Skills; Behavioral Objectives; *Child Caregivers; Child Care Occupations; *Communication Skills; Curriculum Guides; Inservice Education; Instructional Materials; Job Skills; Learning Activities; Learning Modules; *Literacy Education; *Nonverbal Communication; *Observation; Residential Institutions; Social Services; Student Evaluation; Youth Problems; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Workplace Literacy

ABSTRACT

This module is the second of 10 in the Essential Communication and Documentation Skills curriculum. It develops observation, a workplace literacy skill identified as being directly related to the job of the direct care worker. The curriculum is designed to improve the competence of New York State Division for Youth (DFY) direct care staff using contextualized workplace learning materials. The preface and introduction provide information on the curriculum's structure, how to use the curriculum, and how to implement the program. The module is divided into seven sections. The design cover sheet gives an overview of the module design: purpose, methods, performance objectives, and evaluation procedures. The preparation cover sheet lists the following: physical setting, equipment and supplies required, media support, necessary participant materials and handouts, instructor's materials and preparation steps, and options or variations in delivery. The presentation overview lists the method, purpose, and estimated time for the following activities: introduction to observation, observing environmental factors--the safety and security of residents, strategies and guidelines for observing the environment, the power of personal cues--nonverbal communication and observation, observing human factors--the safety and security of residents, DFY youth and nonverbal communication, acting out, and summary and closure. The presentation guide for the trainer is a comprehensive and detailed guide for the delivery of the module activities. Flipchart masters are followed by supplemental notes and materials for the trainer. A participant materials section provides a packet of materials each participant should receive. (YLB)

ED 380 679

Essential Communication and Documentation Skills
Module: Observation Skills

Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program

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ESSENTIAL COMMUNICATION AND DOCUMENTATION SKILLS

for the New York State Division for Youth

This document was conceived and developed in New York State and produced under a United States Department of Education National Workplace Literacy Program Grant (FY 1992) within a project administered by the Rockefeller College Professional Development Program, University at Albany, State University of New York, in partnership with the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations, the Civil Service Employees' Association, the New York State Division for Youth, and through the administration of the Research Foundation, State University of New York. The contents of this manual do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education but rather are reflective of the philosophy and approach of the grant recipient that administered the local project and all the partners and helpers identified with the project. The following individuals acted as official representatives for the partnership organizations.

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Joanne Casabella, Administrative Officer, Office for Research
Thomas J. Kinney, Director, Professional Development Program
Eugene J. Monaco, Deputy Director, Professional Development Program
Christine A. Katchmar, Workplace Literacy Project Director, Professional Development Program

New York State Division for Youth
Judith Blair, Director, Bureau of Staff Development and Training
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Governor's Office of Employee Relations
Diane Wagner, Program Administrator, Project Reach
Harriet Spector, Employee Relations Assistant, Project Reach

Civil Service Employees' Association
Ira Baumgarten, Director of Labor Education Action Program

The curriculum was designed to improve the competency of Division for Youth Direct Care Staff in the workplace areas of reading, writing, listening, speaking, observation, and decision making using contextualized workplace learning materials. Two additional accomplished goals were to help institutionalize DFY's capacity to provide continuing workplace literacy instruction and support beyond the funding period, and provide a replicable model of contextual learning for the juvenile justice and adult literacy fields. The Professional Development Program of Rockefeller College, University at Albany, State University of New York, invites your questions regarding this project. The materials and ideas are available for duplication and use upon request to Rockefeller College Professional Development Program.

Albany, New York
July 1994

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills for the New York State Division for Youth* curriculum manual with all its companion pieces and supplementary products came to fruition through the talents and commitments of many individuals. We would like to acknowledge all those for their efforts and to give special mention to the individuals and groups listed below, whose contributions were particularly valuable.

We acknowledge the New York State Division for Youth for welcoming this project and curriculum into its strategic training plan, and for providing the many staff members, the time, and the resources that were dedicated to the project implementation and curriculum development. We especially acknowledge the efforts of Brian Caldwell, Margaret Davis and Judith Blair of the Division's Bureau of Training and Development. Also appreciated are the staff of the Division for Youth's Training Centers, including but not limited to Greg Gallina, Terry Keith Smith, and Reginald Osterhoudt of the Highland and Pyramid Training Centers; Gale Smith, Patsy Murray, Munna Rubaii, and Debra Peete of the MacCormack Training Center; Rick Quinn of the Industry Training Center; and Phyllis Patricelli, Dena Thompson, Margaret Smith, and Margaret Kinney Trolio of the Tryon Training Center. Many personnel from the DFY Central Office also deserve appreciation, particularly the support staff, including Sandy Vanier, Karen Tribley-Smith, Suzanne Pohlmann, and Shirley Clark. We would like to give special acknowledgments to the many Youth Division Aides, supervisors, and managers from throughout the New York State Division for Youth who willingly participated in the literacy task analyses, the focus groups, the field tests of the curriculum, the pilot tests, and the many other activities that were instrumental in bringing this curriculum and project to its final state.

We thank Diane Wagner of the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations - Project REACH for all recommendations and guidance related to REACH and tutoring issues for New York State government and for being the inspiration behind the original project proposal to the National Workplace Literacy Program. Without Diane's expertise in the operation of REACH across all New York State agencies and her close working relationship with Literacy Volunteers of America - New York State, the tutoring component of this project could not have been implemented.

We further appreciate the insight and involvement of Ira Baumgarten of the New York State Civil Service Employee's Association, Project LEAP who, as the representative for the labor perspective, continually brought the implementation of project elements and the development of the curriculum around to an awareness of the worker's need. His breadth of experience in varying levels of educational programming across the agencies of New York State Government provided a valuable perspective regarding the institutionalization process within the Division for Youth.

We would also like to give acknowledgment to Jorie Philippi, Principal Evaluator, Performance Plus Learning Consultants, Inc. as the external evaluator of the project. In providing insightful feedback through interim evaluation reports and numerous discussions, Ms. Philippi helped to keep the project on course and true to its goals and objectives. Her experience in evaluating and implementing numerous workplace literacy programs throughout the United States under the United States Department of Education's sponsorship and as a private consultant served the project well. She was able to quell anxieties as well as provide expert advice for program development and operation through all phases of the project implementation. Her efforts and expertise are greatly appreciated.

We thank the members of the Literacy Advisory Committee and the Program Planning Committee for their time commitment and expert advice regarding project design and implementation from the varying perspectives that each member brought to the meetings and other sessions.

At the Rockefeller Professional Development Program we would like to acknowledge Judith Anderson, Computer Specialist, Sally Berdan, Director of Publications, George Dowse, Graphic Artist, and Bob Richardson, Senior Editor, for consultation in their areas of expertise. And, finally, for his professional oversight and unflagging support throughout the entire project design and implementation, we thank Eugene J. Monaco, Special Assistant to the Provost of Rockefeller College for Professional Development, Training, and Research.

The drafts of the curriculum and all companion pieces were the products of a team of expert curriculum developers consisting of Muriel Medina, Ph.D., Mary Hall, and Christine Katchmar of Rockefeller College and Brian Caldwell of the New York State Division for Youth, ably assisted in word processing and graphic design by Sandy Guntner and Mary Campney of Rockefeller College. The creative dynamic that this team achieved and maintained during the arduous curriculum development process was instrumental in achieving the high quality that the final products have. The willingness of all team members to work above and beyond the regular work periods all across New York State was reflective of the level of commitment to a quality effort. The level of collaboration between the work site representative and the educational representative that was achieved by the members of the team helped to make the curriculum a truly contextualized workplace literacy product. We appreciate all the efforts of this talented team.

PREFACE

Essential Communication and Documentation Skills for Youth Division Aides of the New York State Division for Youth was conceived and developed in New York State and produced under a United States Department of Education National Workplace Literacy Program Grant (FY 1992) within a project administered by the Rockefeller College Professional Development Program, University at Albany, State University of New York in partnership with the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations, the Civil Service Employees' Association, the New York State Division for Youth, and through the administration of the Research Foundation, State University of New York. The contents of this manual do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education but rather are reflective of the philosophy and approach of the grant recipient that administered the local project – the Rockefeller College Professional Development Program – and all the partners and helpers identified with the project.

The National Workplace Literacy Program

Workplace literacy has come to the forefront in adult education within the last ten years as increasing attention has focused on the skills needed for the average adult to compete successfully in the workplace of today and the future. To compete in a global economy American workers must have strong basic skills and more: they must be able to use the latest technology and up-to-date service and production techniques; they must be able to think critically, solve problems, and make decisions; they must be able to work in teams and have a high level of independence with less and less reliance on supervision; they must have strong communication skills. Congress created the NWLP in response to concerns that an increasing percentage of the American work force lacked the skills to compete in the world marketplace.

Since 1988 the NWLP has provided grants to fund local projects that are operated by exemplary partnerships of business, labor, and educational organizations. These partnerships are funded to provide services that will improve the productivity of the work force through the improvement of basic skills needed in the workplace. These projects focus on developing the knowledge and the ability of workers in a specific job context to apply a broad spectrum of literacy and reasoning skills to job performance in their immediate employment that will be transportable to future jobs in other employment contexts. Workplace literacy is much broader than generic reading and writing; today's basic skills go beyond that.

Originally the NWLP was part of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 and was later incorporated in the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Act of 1988. The National Literacy Act of 1991 amended the program to be as it is presently. The NWLP is administered by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) within the Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL). The program continues to exist within the larger context of the Goals 2000 Educate America Act, Goal 5, that, "Every adult (be) literate and able to compete in the workforce."

The Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Project

In 1992 a partnership was formed in New York State between the Professional Development Program of Rockefeller College, University at Albany, State University of New York; the Civil Service Employees' Association, Inc.; and the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations - Project REACH. Rockefeller College represented the educational component, CSEA presented the labor perspective, and GOER-Project REACH brought the management view. Rockefeller College submitted a proposal to the NWLP to develop and implement a job-related basic skills curriculum for the New York State agency determined by CSEA / GOER-Project REACH to be the recipient of the educational and other services of the grant. The New York State Division for Youth (DFY) was that agency and its direct care workers, the Youth Division Aides (YDAs), the targeted employees.

In 1993 Rockefeller College received the grant to carry out the proposed project plan. The project drew upon the resources of all the partners. Accomplishment of the goals has been reflective of the cooperation and commitment that was given by all throughout the year-and-a- half of the grant period, especially by the NYSDFY. As the recipient of the grant services, it was the workplace context of the project and all instructional services were delivered to its employees. Their role was key to the success of the grant implementation, and the level of success can be attributed to their efforts and commitment to institutionalize workplace literacy within the juvenile justice system of New York State. This project serves as a demonstration project from which other like systems can draw parallels and conclusions for similar implementation.

Project Goals

The proposal to the NWLP articulated specific goals to be achieved. They were as follows.

- To produce literacy gains upgrading the workplace literacy skills of a targeted population of NYS employees (Youth Division Aides of the New York State Division for Youth) in order to help them satisfactorily complete a competency-based job traineeship and increase job productivity by improving their workplace reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and problem solving
- To demonstrate a model workplace literacy program for this category of worker and job title through the development of a model of contextualized learning using a curriculum and training design that could be replicated across the juvenile justice system
- To evaluate the project and share findings with the adult literacy and the juvenile justice fields
- To develop in the New York State Division for Youth the capacity to provide continuing workplace literacy instruction and support beyond the funding period

The Educational Program

As indicated, the adult population determined to receive the services of this partnership project consisted of the Youth Division Aides (YDAs) of the New York State Division for Youth (DFY). These employees are the front line workers in DFY's youth residential facilities. They provide direct supervision for the youth who have been assigned by the courts to these facilities. Their successful job performance is highly dependent upon workplace literacy skills.

In developing a curriculum for this population, an in-depth study was made of the reading, writing, speaking, listening, reasoning, and decision-making skills used on the job by experienced YDAs considered by supervisors and administrators to be strong employees. This study included observing YDAs in DFY residential facilities throughout New York State, interviewing YDAs and their supervisors, and analyzing the printed material used in the facilities. Initial input from focus groups and an Advisory Committee of Administrators, supervisors, and employees of DFY was integral to the curriculum development. This input, combined with the results of the extensive field work, laid the foundation for development of the 40-hour curriculum entitled *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills*. The curriculum was further refined and developed by extensive review and input from training staff and supervisors of DFY.

The final *Essentials* curriculum is comprehensive, evolving around the following educational goals:

- To enhance the YDA's awareness of the communication and documentation skills and responsibilities required at DFY
- To identify their own strengths and areas for improvement in observation, decision making, oral communication, reading, and writing
- To learn strategies for strengthening their skills in observation, decision making, oral communication, reading, and writing
- To develop ownership for their own learning in training and on the job at DFY

YDAs were selected by supervisors to attend Essentials for the first six months of operation of the program. The curriculum is now a core component of the training given by DFY to all newly- hired YDAs. It is delivered in a one-week, 40-hour span during the regular work day. It has become the third week of DFY's Basic In-Service training for all newly hired YDAs, and all new YDAs are mandated to go through the program. The programs have been conducted across the state close to DFY residential facilities in order to increase ease of access for employees. In the future, they may be delivered at a central employee training academy. The curriculum is modularized according to critical skills and content areas; this makes it possible to deliver selected modules to more veteran employees, as needed. The curriculum as designed is complete for the general YDA population and is intended to be supplemented with additional services. such as tutoring, for select YDAs.

The Tutoring Component

The impetus for the proposal to the NWLP for this project came from Project REACH, which, with CSEA, had had broad statewide experience with workers like the DFY YDA, and which had become well aware of the literacy needs of New York state employees. The tutoring component of this workplace literacy project was provided through Project REACH and CSEA's in-kind support. Project REACH is the workplace basic skills program available to all CSEA-represented New York State employees. Project REACH is a joint labor/management initiative funded and operated by the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations and the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc. REACH has been providing basic skills instruction and support for New York State employees since 1986.

Both CSEA and GOER -Project REACH had been involved with an earlier NWLP project targeting another New York State agency, and they had become aware of the need for some employees to receive additional support beyond the classroom instruction provided through the core curriculum of such a project. Therefore, the proposal to the NWLP included a tutoring component supplementing the core educational experience that the YDA received through the 40-hour *Essentials* program, if needed.

Since Project REACH and CSEA had a long-term, ongoing relationship with Literacy Volunteers of America - New York State in providing tutoring services to employees of New York State agencies, the logic of incorporating the LVA tutor program into this project was clear. It is within the parameters of this working relationship that the tutoring component was designed and developed. As designed, DFY YDAs are invited to set up tutoring sessions with an LVA NYS tutor through GOER-Project REACH. The YDA attends tutoring either on his/her own time, or during the workday with one-half of the session donated by DFY as an hour of compensated employment and the other half given from the employee's time.

Two supplemental products, *The Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring* for Tutors and its companion, the *Affiliate Administrator's Guide*, were developed through the project to assist LVA volunteers with the tutoring of the YDA to insure that the tutoring complemented the *Essentials* program and was contextualized to the DFY workplace. The *Affiliate Administrator's Guide* assists LVA NYS Affiliate Administrators in implementing the tutoring within their local affiliate and its ongoing association with Project REACH. These products were collaborative efforts of LVA NYS, Project REACH, NYS DFY, and Rockefeller College.

Unique Project Features

The *Essentials* curriculum was carefully designed to improve the competency of Division for Youth direct care staff in the workplace areas of observation, reading, writing, listening, speaking, and decision making using contextualized workplace learning materials. Two additional goals to be accomplished were to help institutionalize DFY's capacity to provide continuing workplace literacy instruction and support beyond the funding period, and provide a replicable model of contextual learning. These goals were projected to be accomplished through some unique features, as follows:

- A 40-hour customized curriculum with all training materials contextualized to the workplace of the New York State Division for Youth and the job of the Youth Division Aide
- A customized workplace literacy skills assessment that would inform instruction and be used as the basis of the YDA's Individual Development Plan
- A 4-hour learning skills module that would be incorporated into the 40-hour curriculum
- Delivery of the 40-hour curriculum to DFY Youth Division Aides throughout New York State in DFY Training Centers supplemented with follow-up tutoring and mentoring at the worksite
- Training Center and home unit teams that would include instructors, mentors, and tutors to implement the Individual Development Plans
- Training modules and program guides for instructors, mentors, and tutors
- Periodic administration of workplace literacy assessment measures to examine the effects of training
- Training of trainers to develop up to 50 instructors able to deliver the 40-hour curriculum in order to create the capacity to continue the program after NWLP funding ceased
- Dissemination of the curriculum to the adult literacy and juvenile justice fields
- Program evaluation following the CIPP model and conducted by Performance Plus Learning Consultants, Inc., Jorie Philippi, Principal Evaluator

The materials and ideas contained in this manual are available for duplication and use upon request to Rockefeller College. The video tape mentioned in the curriculum, as well as both the tutoring component supplemental materials, *Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring* and *Affiliate Administrator's Guide* are available upon request. The hope is that the curriculum and other products will be instrumental for others to continue the work conceived and initiated within the New York State Division for Youth by Rockefeller College and its partners through the Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program and the United States Department of Education National Workplace Literacy Program.

The Rockefeller College Professional Development Program is pleased to have been a part of such a dynamic and collaborative development process. We invite your questions regarding this project and the *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills* curriculum manual and its supplementary products. You may reach us at 518-442-5422 (phone); 518-442-5768 (fax), or you may write our offices at 135 Western Avenue, Richardson Hall, Albany, New York 12222.

Christine A. Katchmar, Program Director
Albany, New York
December 1994

FOR THE TRAINER:

Using the Curriculum Manual for *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills*

Introduction to the Curriculum

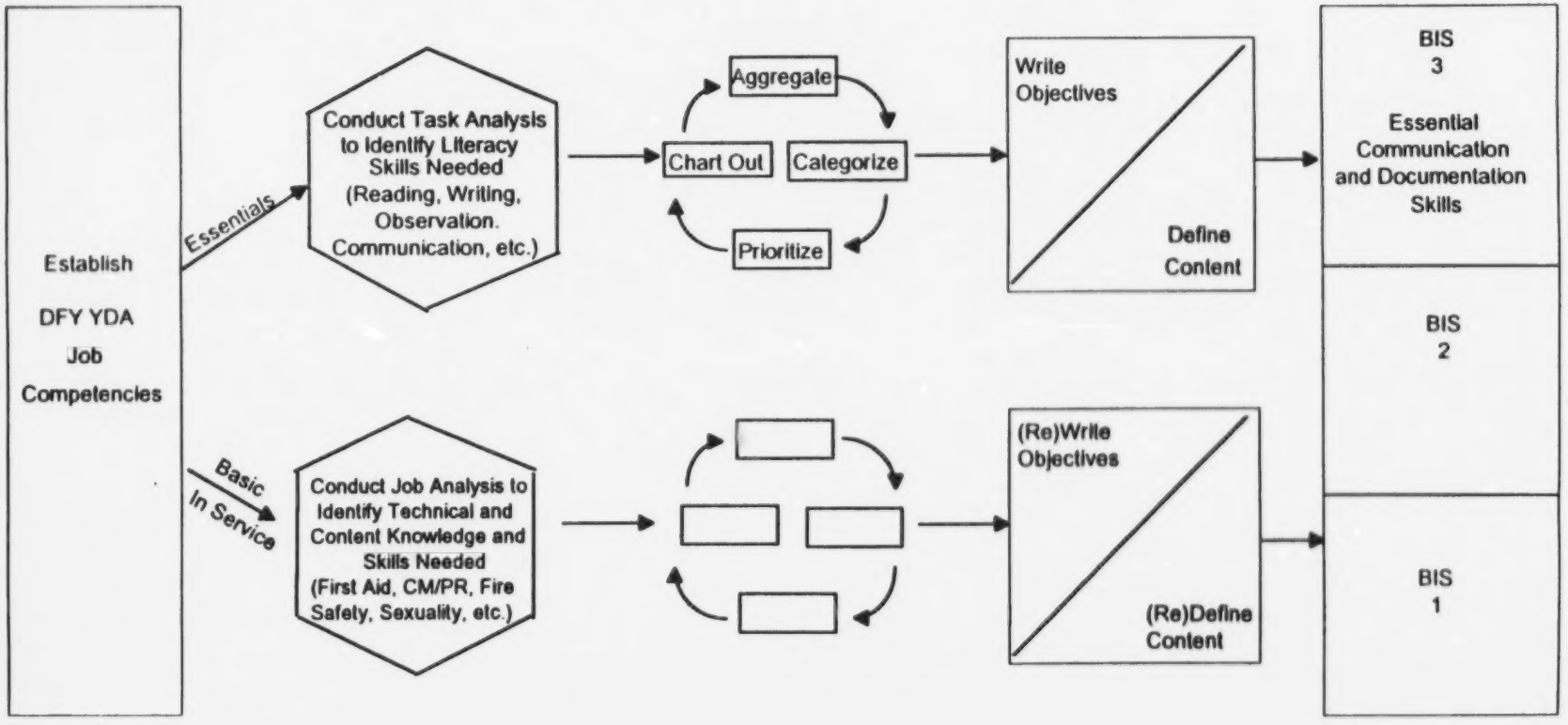
Welcome to *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills*, a comprehensive workplace literacy curriculum that was developed in 1993-4 for and in collaboration with the New York State Division for Youth through the Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program under the auspices of a National Workplace Literacy Program grant (FY 92) in partnership with the NYS GOER - Project REACH and CSEA. The curriculum was designed to improve the ability of the New York State Division for Youth's direct care staff to do their jobs better in the residential facilities of the Division for Youth throughout New York State.

Essentials is not job training; it is a workplace literacy program, designed to improve worker competencies in the areas of workplace, reading, writing, listening, speaking, observation, and decision making both on basic and higher order skill and knowledge levels. *Essentials* is an example of contextualized learning. This means it is based on the working environment and materials where the trainees work, in this case the New York State Division for Youth (NYSDFY).

As you review the *Essentials* curriculum manual, you will notice that all training materials are contextualized to the workplace of the New York State Division for Youth and the specific job of the Youth Division Aide. Actual workplace materials from the DFY facilities are used as the basis for instruction, especially in the Reading and Form Documentation modules. The curriculum was developed using the curriculum development model shown in Figure 1.

While this curriculum manual is intended to be a resource that a trainer can use as a guide for conducting the *Essentials* training at the DFY Training Centers across New York State, it can also be used to develop specific lessons or plans for similar instruction for similar employees at like work sites. The curriculum follows an adult learning instructional philosophy and presents general principles as well as detailed instructions for conducting a successful training program contextualized to the juvenile justice workplace and the job of the direct care worker. It is recommended that agencies outside of the NYS Division for Youth who wish to use this curriculum develop instructional materials from their own work sites to enhance the transfer of skill development from training to on-the-job. Rockefeller College offers technical assistance and training that would assist your agency in this tailoring process. However, tailoring is not required; the basic and higher order skills that are targeted for development can be successfully addressed with other audiences using the materials in the manual. Other agencies will be able to successfully adapt this curriculum to their workplace training by using the examples of materials found in this manual

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
for
Revision of NYS DFY Basic In Service Training Program



Philosophy

The philosophy underlying *Essentials* shaped the content and instructional processes of the curriculum as well as the roles of the participants and the trainers in the learning.

Literacy is viewed as the ability to accomplish tasks rather than knowing a set of isolated skills that are ends in themselves - both basic and higher order. Participants strengthen their skill and knowledge within the framework of work-related tasks through both individual and collaborative practices, completing these tasks that simulate practices on the job.

Participants are viewed as competent adults who bring much to the training. The content of *Essentials* incorporates the YDA's knowledge of youth care and of DFY procedures and regulations and builds on existing interpersonal, teamwork, and decision-making skill and knowledge.

Participants are expected to be involved, responsible, active learners. On the first day of *Essentials*, participants learn how they can be more effective as learners. Using this information, they set personal objectives. They build the content of certain modules by developing and acting out work-related skits that form the basis for class exercises. Throughout, the participants provide feedback to one another, helping each other to assess and improve skills, while gaining knowledge. On the final day of the 5-day program, the participants develop individualized plans to continue their learning back on the job. The process they use to develop their Individual Development Plans (IDP) reflects the emphasis of their being in control of and responsible for their own ongoing learning, a philosophical cornerstone of the entire curriculum.

Instructional Techniques and the Trainer's Role

The instructional processes of *Essentials* are designed to address and encourage a variety of learning styles. They include:

- Trainer presentation
- Whole group discussion and brainstorming
- Individual skill-building activities
- Paired skill-building activities
- Small group skill-building activities
- Problem-solving and decision-making activities
- Role plays

These methods are highly interactive and participatory. The role of the trainer is to facilitate and encourage interaction through the variety of opportunities that the above provide.

Throughout *Essentials*, the participants learn by watching , listening, and doing as well as from their own feelings, reflections, and personal reactions. They have time to think about situations and to analyze ideas. The trainer will be challenged to adapt to the workplace contexts that evolve spontaneously and enrich these learning processes. One of the most important things the trainer will do is increase participant confidence and self esteem while facilitating the development of skill and knowledge.

Structure of the *Essentials* Curriculum Manual

Essentials consists of 10 modules:

- Introduction and Orientation to the Program
- Observation Skills
- Decision Making
- Listening and Speaking
- Giving Directions to Residents
- Making Oral Reports
- Reading on the Job
- Form Documentation
- Writing Logs and Reports
- Final Assessment and Action Planning

An initial skimming of the manual in the order in which these modules appear will provide an overall sense of the scope and direction of the content. **Introduction and Orientation to the Program** establishes the program objectives and sets the tone for the full week of training. The next eight modules (see list above) develop the actual workplace literacy skills identified as being directly related to the job of the direct care worker. These modules use materials and activities contextualized to the job and the workplace of the DFY YDA in a sequential progress designed to build skill and knowledge in an integrated manner. The concluding module, **Final Assessment and Action Planning**, assists the training participants in establishing goals to continue their professional development beyond the foundation that was established in *Essentials*.

Each module is consistently divided into seven sections to facilitate understanding of the module and the entire curriculum as well as to enhance ease of instruction and learning:

- Design Cover Sheet
- Preparation Cover Sheet
- Presentation Overview
- Presentation Guide for the Trainer
- Flip Chart Masters
- Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer
- Participant's Materials

This structure helps the trainer because each section serves a specific purpose to assist in delivering the curriculum.

Immediately after the module title page is the **Design Cover Sheet**. This gives an overview of the module design, including its title, purpose, methods, performance objectives and evaluation procedures. The **Preparation Cover Sheet** then lists the equipment and supplies required, the media support, if any, the necessary participant materials and handouts, the instructor's materials and preparation steps, and options or variations in delivery. The **Presentation Overview** lists the module's activity titles, the method of delivery, the purpose, and the estimated time the activity will take along with a total estimated time for the entire module. Following these overview sheets is the detailed **Presentation Guide for the Trainer**, a comprehensive and detailed step-by- step guide for the delivery of the module activities. Each module also includes a copy of the **Flip Chart Masters** and the section, **Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer**, which provides additional information and resources to enhance the trainer's understanding of each module's materials and objectives. A **Participant's Materials section provides** the complete packet of the materials that each participant should receive during the delivery of the program; it may be photocopied with the permission of Rockefeller College (518) 442-5422.

Additional Materials

The *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills* videotape was created to be used with the curriculum for the assessment process and for the observation and decision making processes. This tape is available from Rockefeller College to agencies who plan to implement this curriculum.

For the **Reading and Form Documentation** Modules, *Essentials* uses forms that are completed on a regular basis in facilities and NYS DFY policies. These materials appear in the *Essentials* curriculum in the section **Additional Materials**. The instructional process will work best if these readings and forms are provided in separately bound (or stapled) versions. The agency implementing the curriculum should select similar readings and forms from their own workplace.

Two additional resources supplement the *Essentials* learning program. The first, the ***Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring***, a guide for Literacy Volunteers of America - New York State volunteer tutors is available to assist these tutors in developing contextualized tutoring activities for trainees who complete the *Essentials* curriculum and are in need of further educational assistance. This resource is provided to local LVA affiliates through the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations - Project REACH. If at the conclusion of Day 5 a participant chooses to access supplementary individualized tutoring, NYSDFY has set up a relationship with REACH and a process with LVA for the employee to receive tutoring on the job. The second resource, the ***Affiliate Administrator's Guide***, is for the LVA Affiliate Administrator to operate the tutoring component. These are both available through the Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program. Other organizations outside of NYS DFY may find these two resources valuable if they are interested in using the services of their local LVA affiliate.

Assessment

In *Essentials*, assessment is considered part of the instructional process and incorporates learner involvement. In addition, just as the instructional content and learning activities are drawn from the workplace context, assessment is conducted by doing tasks that direct care workers actually do on a daily basis at work. Five types of assessment processes are used in *Essentials*.

Pre and Post Assessment - These formal assessments simulate the way in which YDAs apply literacy skills on the job and are conducted prior to and at the conclusion of the week of instruction. For both assessments, participants watch a video cutting of an incident involving youth in a DFY residential facility that would require them to write a formal report. Based on that incident, participants are directed to perform six tasks. They:

- Write notes on what they observed.
- Write the decision that they would make for addressing the situation.
- Write a log entry about the incident.
- Write a formal report about the incident.
- Read a passage of DFY policy related to the incident, take notes to help them recall the content, and write a summary of the information in their own words.
- Complete a questionnaire to illustrate their understanding of important oral communication components.

The results of the assessments produce a measure of the YDAs' basic skills in completing job tasks. The pre-assessment can determine a focus for training activity during the week; the post-assessment will illustrate the participant's growth as a result of training and provides a valuable tool for self instruction.

Self-Assessment - In keeping with the emphasis on helping YDAs be self-directed learners, participants assess their own learning throughout *Essentials*. They apply checklists to evaluate how well they have done on communication activities, they assess their need for applying reading strategies, and they assess their own writing. In addition, at the end of each module, they assess what they have learned from the module and in what ways they need to improve. The trainer's role is to facilitate this self assessment and encourage objectivity.

Trainer Assessment - Throughout *Essentials*, trainers observe and give input on participants' progress in learning the basic skills, and they offer suggestions on how that learning can continue back on the job. In individual conferences on the last day of training, trainers discuss the assessments with participants and help them apply the results in developing their Individual Development Plans. To become proficient in this process is challenging and rewarding. The trainer should keep in the forefront the principle that the participant is responsible for the learning and avoid any value-laden and judgmental comments or reactions. The trainer should consciously place the responsibility for the final assessment on the participant.

Peer Assessment - Participants have several opportunities to give feedback to and receive feedback from their peers during the 40 hours of *Essentials*. This peer assessment encourages teamwork and builds critical thinking skills. It also provides an opportunity for YDAs to practice the feedback skills they need for communicating effectively with resident youth and with co-workers. As part of the peer assessment, YDAs learn how to constructively use feedback that is given to them rather than reacting to it in a defensive manner. The trainer, again, will need to facilitate this process.

Portfolio Assessment - As part of the ongoing assessment process, participants build individual portfolios, called Personal Progress Portfolios, of the work they have done during the training. Learners select samples of their work which reflect the various areas covered in the training and which show the progress they have made in these areas. Trainers monitor the collection of portfolio items and encourage participation.

In *Essentials*, assessment is woven into the curriculum. The assessment processes are designed to address the varying learning styles that the participants bring to their jobs and are in sync with the instructional philosophy and learning processes of the overall training program. The trainer needs to familiarize him/herself with all the processes used and examine the curriculum guide to identify opportunities for application.

Logistics

Time - *Essentials* is best held during the regular 8-hour work day. The times given in the curriculum manual for activities and modules are fairly true to real time of accomplishment. Times, however, will vary depending upon the number of participants since many activities are dependent upon participant interaction.

Numbers - Suggested numbers of participants are included in the **Design Cover Sheet.** As suggested, it is best to keep the size of training groups down to 20. Suggested numbers for breakout groups are given. It is important to follow these suggestions.

Space - The training room should have enough room for the 20 participants to develop and act out the skits and role plays and to break into small groups for activities. Having a second space is very helpful but not absolutely necessary as long as the main training space is large enough to allow for ease of movement and separation of participants. Tables, as well as chairs, are necessary since the participants do a considerable amount of writing and need good writing surfaces. This is especially important during the pre-and post-training assessment activities, during the Individual Development Plan development, and for the writing module. Since *Essentials* is conducted for five consecutive days, rearranging the space and participants periodically will help keep energy and interest high.

Other - Detailed information regarding materials, equipment, audiovisual aids, handouts, etc. are provided in each modules' **Preparation Cover Sheet.**

Preparing Yourself for *Training*: A Final Word

The *Essentials* curriculum manual is fairly self-explanatory. You can best prepare yourself to provide quality, contextualized training for the NYS DFY YDA or other direct care worker at a juvenile justice facility if you:

- Thoroughly review the trainer preparation sections of the manual: the **Design Preparation Sheet**, the **Presentation Overview** and the **Presentation Guide**, and the **Supplemental Notes for the Trainer**.
- Thoroughly review the audiovisual materials and the Participants' Materials, including the participants' supplemental readings and forms.
- Explore the ways in which day one and day five contribute to the training goals for the week, the pre-and post-assessments, the Personal Progress Portfolio, the Individual Development Plan, and the self-instructional learning assessments.
- If possible, take an in-service training of trainers program offered through the Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program, which educates the trainer on the instructional techniques and approaches in *Essentials*.
- Practice some of the activities in each module with a population similar to the YDA population.

We wish you success in your training assignment. We will continue to be available for any discussion or questions you may have in the process.

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MODULE

OBSERVATION SKILLS

DESIGN COVER SHEET - OVERVIEW

for Module:
Observation Skills

Module/Workshop Title: Observation Skills **#:**

Course Title: Essential Communication and Documentation Skills **#:**

Prepared by: Staff of Rockefeller College, University at Albany, SUNY in collaboration with staff of the New York State Division for Youth **Date:** July 1994

Purpose/Goal: This session is designed to build awareness of and improved skill in the perception and interpretation of environmental factors and non verbal cues to preserve the safety and security of the facility

Suggested Presenter(s): DFY Staff and/or Adult Basic Education Instructors who have completed the Essentials' Training of Trainers

Total Time:

4 hour(s)

Suggested Schedule:

Day 1, A.M. and P.M. Session

Target Population/Qualifications:

Direct Service workers who have completed Pre-Service and BIS 1

Number of Participants:

8 - 24 maximum

Methods Used:

- Individual and small group exercises
- Guided discussions
- Role play
- Video vignette analysis

Performance Objectives:

Upon completing this module, YDAs will be able to:

- Identify the observable cues in the environment at the facility as related to safety and security
- Observe and interpret resident non-verbal behaviors, especially as related to safety and security
- Accurately sort, recall, and recount cues to identify, understand and predict potentially problematic situations
- Distinguish between observations and interpretations, and feelings and opinions
- Identify their own strengths and areas for improvement in observation

Evaluation Procedures:

- In-session instructor and peer assessment of practice observations
- Pre / Post Training assessment experience
- Portfolio building: Observation Sheets from video and role play analysis
  Summary and Discussion

DESIGN COVER SHEET - PREPARATION

For Module:
Observation Skills

Physical Setting: (e.g. room size, furniture arrangement)
Room should be large enough to accommodate 8 - 24 participants plus instructors; chairs should be movable to reconfigure for group and individual activity; tables should be available for writing activities; room should have capability of showing a group role play to the entire training group.

Equipment and Supplies:		**Multi Media Support:**	
#Item		# Item	
x	easel/newsprint	x	VCR/monitor (type:)
x	markers	x	videotape (length:) *Essentials*
x	masking tape		camcorder (video camera)
x	notepads		16 mm. projector
x	pens/pencils		film (length)
	nametags/tents		screen
x	training records		overhead projector
	other:		other:

Student Materials/Handouts: (title, number needed of each)

Participant packet, including the following handouts:

1. How Observant Are You?
2. Observing for a Safe Environment: Policies and Guidelines (3 p)
3. Observing Environmental Factors
4. Observing Nonverbal Factors
5. Acting Out
6. Summary and Discussion

Additional Participant Observation Sheets

Instructor Materials/Preparation: (e.g. prepare visuals, prearrange groupings)

Prepare all AV materials: AV1 Module Objectives
Set up training space in participant groups of 5 per group
Be certain to have copies of facility Safety Violation photos
Set videotape on the correct cut from *Essentials* tape
Establish with adjacent facility the optional field observation time and process, if appropriate (See options below)
Review Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer

Options/Variations:

If the group is small enough and the facility and director are amenable, a field observation as a culminating exercise to recreate an authentic work experience would be a valuable addition to the module.

References:

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

For Module:
Observation Skills

Time Presenter	Activity Title/Method/Purpose
25 min.	**Introduction to Observation** *Individual exercise; guided debriefing discussion* To establish the point that all need to attend to this area of skill development, and that individual backgrounds, values, short and long term memory span, job experience, and other factors specific to individual situations such as intention, mood, physical state, etc. have an impact on effectiveness
30 min.	**Observing Environmental Factors: The Safety and Security of Residents** *Individual exercise; guided discussion; group exercise* To sensitize staff to common facility environmental factors that may lead to potential security and safety risk
5 min.	**Strategies and Guidelines for Observing the Environment** *Large group brainstorm* To propose, discuss, and explore strategies and guidelines for enhancing individual and team abilities in observations skills
20 min.	**The Power of Personal Cues: Non-verbal Communication and Observation** *Trainer demonstration and group activity; guided discussion* To introduce the elements of non-verbal communication
45 min.	**Observing Human Factors: The Safety and Security of Residents** *Video viewing with individual writing task; group debriefing discussion* To develop awareness of individual strengths and weaknesses in observation skill as applied to a simulated workplace situation presented in video form

30 min.	**DFY Youth and Nonverbal Communication** *Small group activity; role play* To build a list of common youth practice in nonverbal communication and to experience them in operation
60 min.	**Acting Out** *Small group role play; large group fish bowl* To practice proposed strategies and guidelines for observing and recalling resident behaviors in a group role play of a facility situation
15 min.	**Summary and Closure** *Facilitator led discussion, paired exercise, portfolio building* To provide an opportunity to compare/contrast the results of the day's work tasks and learnings in the spirit of building the teamwork approach to learning in training and on the job To summarize the day's activities and preview the next module
Total Time	4 hours

PRESENTATION GUIDE FOR THE TRAINER

PRESENTATION GUIDE

for Module: Observation Skills

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials

25 minutes	**Introduction to Observation**
	
	Individual exercise
	
	Have participants take out Handout 1 and do the activity "How Observant Are You?" based on their observations since they entered this room today.
	
	Guided discussion
	
	After the group has done the individual writing activity, present the objectives of the module and provide an overview of the content and the progression of activities.
	
	Then, lead the group in a guided discussion of the need to focus on perception and observation skills and the factors involved. Discussion could include:
	• *constantly bombarded by numerous cues from the environment*
	• *cannot absorb and make meaning of them all*
	• *limited sensory processing systems*
	• *need to sort and filter cues*
	• *need to interpret and assign meaning*
	• *influencing factors or filters :*
	  • *sensory acuity*
	  • *past experiences*
	  • *job experiences*
	  • *emotional state, etc. (Put these on newsprint.)*
	• *important to know the difference between our observations and our interpretations.*
	• *YDAs learn to sort and discriminate, using the filter of the safety and security of the residents.*
	
	Have them build a group observation list on newsprint from their collective notes from Handout 1. Collect the information in two columns: environment and people. Do not title the columns yet. As they create the lists, <u>be careful to differentiate between observation and interpretation</u>. After they have created the lists, ask them what they think the two lists represent. They should easily identify them for what they are.
	
	Environmental Factors | People/Human Factors
		Handout 1: How Observant Are You?
		
		AV 1: Module Objectives
		
		Supplemental Trainer's Materials: Observation and Perception: A Rationale
		
		Newsprint
		
		Handout 1: How Observant Are You?"
		
		Newsprint

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
30 minutes	**Observing Environmental Factors: The Safety and Security of Residents** *Individual exercise* Have participants take out Handout 2. Review and discuss the lists of contraband. *Guided discussion* Ask participants for other items that are contraband at their facilities. List them on newsprint. Ask them if they have reviewed their facility contraband list. If not, instruct them to note it on Handout 6 at the end of the session as a way to improve their skills. Then review the second page on flammables ... toxic substances. Note that all of these substances are to be kept locked in cabinets in approved, marked "flammable" containers. Note also that all liquids must be stored in clearly labeled containers and that toxics should be used under the supervision of authorized staff. Ask how many staff are familiar with their facility's Toxic Policy and location of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). Instruct them to note this on Handout 6 if they are not. Review page 3 of Handout 2 on Housekeeping and Fire Safety. Ask the group for additional items. Stress that the nature of this policy is to protect the safety and security of the facility and that the YDA is responsible for this. Therefore, it is important to build their capacity in this realm of observation skills. *Group exercise* Break participants up into small groups. Have participants take out Handout 3. Go over the directions. Pass out the safety violation photos, and have them look at them in their groups. Give participants an opportunity to observe and take notes. Discuss each photo one at a time after they are done in order to build their capacity to observe environmental factors. Refer to the DFY policy as needed. (Note: Descriptions are available in the Answer Key in the trainer's supplemental materials.)	Handout 2: Observing for a Safe Environment Newsprint Handout 3: Observing Environmental Factors Photos of Facility Safety Violations Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
5 minutes	**Strategies and Guidelines for Observing the Environment** *Large group brainstorm* Lead the group in an informal brainstorm activity that elicits common practice at facilities that can help participants be better observers of environmental factors. (i.e., What are strategies that they and others use/could use and things that they do or could do to improve their skills as observers of the environment at the facility?) Put responses on newsprint. Some might be: <u>Tips for Being Good Observers</u> Know the relevant policies and local FOG Write in the log, legibly Read the log Look at everything as a potential weapon Look for variations/differences: Know the norms Look for things out of the ordinary: Know the norms Trust your instincts Doubt and question first Act on what you see Act ASAP/Don't procrastinate Communicate and document what you see/say/do Note when things are missing Keep good records Keep yourself in good shape mentally Ignore distractions **LUNCH BREAK**	Newsprint

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
20 minutes	**The Power of Personal Cues: Non-Verbal Communication and Observation** *Trainer demonstration; group activity* First demonstrate by using yourself as the subject of scrutiny and analysis regarding nonverbal cues: Invite the group to "play Sherlock Holmes." Direct them to share their observations of your nonverbal behaviors. Record their comments on a divided newsprint with "Observations" on the left and "Interpretations" on the right: Observations (behaviors) | Interpretations (opinions) moves hand a lot left handed listens to the entire statement acknowledges others' comments makes eye contact gives trainees time is direct with criticism smiles a lot, jokes speaks in specifics dressed in loose-fitting clothing This is a good way to introduce the subject of nonverbal cues and messages. Be sure to focus on: • voice tone • eye contact • cultural factors • age • body posture • gesture • hygiene • dress • group sounds, etc. Facilitate a good discussion about nonverbal messages. List these points on newsprint. Include the distinction between intentional and unintentional messages.	Newsprint Newsprint Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
	Guided discussion Lead a discussion on the preceding activity. Ask: Why is this important? Focus on the importance of distinguishing and separating observations from interpretations as a way of understanding how personal experiences, values, feelings, etc. affect the way data is interpreted. Reinforce also that at DFY we report observations and separate and clearly identify interpretations in our documentation (i.e., observable behavior vs opinions).	Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
45 minutes	**Observing Human Factors: The Safety and Security of Residents** *Video viewing with individual writing task* Tell participants that they will be watching a video segment to practice their observation skills. Have them take out Handout 4 and read the directions. Ask them to explain what the directions tell them to assure that all have read and understood. Before playing the video, explain that they are the staff in the scene and are the "camera." Play the video a first time and have participants record their observations in the left column of an Observation Sheet. Their observations should include: • pat on back • trash talk • raised tone of voice • pushing • hat on ground • racial composition • number of residents • physical descriptions *Group debriefing discussion* Discuss their observations in relation to non-verbal behavior. Stress separating observation from interpretation. Have them cross off all notes that are interpretations. Encourage them to note as much as possible of what they observe. *Video viewing with individual writing task* Play the video a second time and have participants record their interpretations and their feelings in the right column of the Observation Sheet. Encourage them to note further observations. *Group debriefing discussion* Compare and contrast participants' responses. Discuss why there are such variations. Again, bring out the perceptual influences: personal background, position of observer,	Handout 4: Observing Human Factors Videotape: *Essentials* Tape Observation VCR Observation Sheets

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
30 minutes	**DFY Youth and Nonverbal Communication** *Small group activity; role play* Divide participants into small groups. Allow 5 minutes for each group to develop a list of current non-verbal practices and behaviors of DFY youth on newsprint. Trainer may wish to provide the following examples to stimulate thinking: • slap chest and lean forward: You got a problem? • slap chest and reach out to other: You got a problem? • hand in face: You got a problem? • pant leg up: sign of being gay • pants down with boxers out: I'm with it. • scarves - on head, hanging out of back pocket, on ankles: implies gang association • layered clothing: ready to fight; ready to escape, abused kid, concealing something • using Vaseline: ready to fight • slamming chest, hands: Want some of this? • door slamming • coughing Direct them to concentrate on the intentional or symbolic message cues that residents use. Note that some gestures are DFY specific; some are general to adolescence and others might reflect symbols common to gangs or life on the street. *Role Play* Have each group take turns demonstrating behaviors from their lists. Have observers discuss interpretations and feelings generated by the behaviors. Distinguish these or align them with intended meanings. Post the lists when all groups have completed their role plays.	Newsprint Supplemental Notes and Materials for the Trainer
60 minutes	**Acting Out** *Small group role play; large group fish bowl* Have participants refer to Handout 5. Assign small groups to role play "Acting Out." Groups alternately act as observers and recorders, taking notes on the observation sheets. Instructor should continue to focus on differentiating between that which is observed and that which is thought, felt, and concluded: observations and interpretations.	Handout 5: Acting Out Observation Sheets

Time/ Presenter	Activity Guidelines	Materials
15 minutes	**Summary and Closure** *Facilitator-led discussion* Summarize the module, referring back to the objectives and preview the next module. *Paired exercise* Assign the group the activity in Handout 6 and facilitate its accomplishment going from pair to pair to provide support and direction. Ask individuals to insert their observation sheets into their Personal Progress Portfolio. *Portfolio building* Have participants complete writing task, Handout 6, and put it in their Personal Progress Portfolio. Preview the next module.	Flip chart: Module Objectives Handout 6: Summary and Closure
Total Time	4 hours	

FLIP CHART MASTERS

Module Objectives

- Identify the observable cues in the environment at the facility as related to safety and security
- Observe and interpret resident non-verbal behaviors as related to safety and security
- Accurately sort, recall, and recount cues to identify, understand, and predict potentially problematic situations
- Distinguish between observations and interpretations, feelings and opinions

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES AND MATERIALS FOR THE TRAINER

OBSERVATION AND PERCEPTION AND THE JOB OF THE YDA

Selectivity of Perception

Perception is the process by which people filter and interpret what their senses tell them, so they can create meaning out of the bombardment of cues from the environment. Two people will see the same thing and observe it/perceive it differently. Why? Because they see and think through personal and professional filters. The reality is that perception is selective due to expectations, past experiences, present motivations and needs, and even because of the way people may feel at any given moment. Due to this selectivity they omit items, add, or even change what they see or hear. Often--unconsciously--we may do this because we want or do not want to believe what we see or hear.

The way in which staff perceive residents will effect the way in which they think about and respond to them. How well they perceive with their senses, what they select to pay attention to, how they organize and interpret the elements in the events and people will affect job performance and the safety and security of the facility.

Foundations of Perception

Perception and, thus, observation, involves all of the senses (seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling) with sight, sound, and touch being the most commonly used and accessible. The more that Direct Care Staff develop their senses, the better they will do the job of observing residents and interpreting their observable behaviors.

An awareness of the components of perception can be helpful in training staff to be better observers of the environments as well as the residents.

Factors that Influence Perception

Some of the factors that can have an impact on perceptual ability are:

- acuity of our sensory equipment (sight, hearing , smell, etc.)
- physical point of view
- psycho-social condition (mood, emotion, etc.)
- past experiences
- present needs and purposes (we perceive what we need to)

In addition personal values can influence perception of residents. Bias and prejudice can be a function as can be past experience. These factors can have a negative influence if staff are not conscious of their presence. Therefore, it is important for staff to be aware of the existence of these in their own perceptions. The activities in this module have been designed to heighten staff awareness of these factors.

Probably by and far the largest obstacle to clear perception is staff's inability to take the time to think and observe carefully due to time pressures, stress, and facility confusion. Staff are constantly perceiving and interpreting in order to create sense out of the chaos. There is a strong human tendency to seek structure by categorizing phenomena; to seek stability in situations and make predictions; to seek meaning by forming cause-effect and comparison-contrast relations. People seek to take charge of their perceptions. This is helpful in directing staff to make order with safety and security as their guideline.

Some Common Pitfalls

Awareness and avoidance of some of the common pitfalls of perception can have a positive influence on job performance. It will help staff to deal with residents better because it will help them to recognize the signs in the facility and in the behavior of the residents that will

help them to better understand and predict the behavior patterns and, therefore, preserve the safety and security conditions -- their primary job.

Some of the basic principles of human perception may be valuable to be aware of when considering observation as a job skill:

- **Figure/Ground:** Our brain is able to distinguish between the actual figure and the background surrounding. We are driven to see this way.
- **Closure:** In the event that all information is not present, we are driven to close gaps to make a complete picture or event
- **Continuity:** We often group items together because they seem to be following a direction or pattern. We often make wrong assumptions because of this phenomena.
- **Proximity:** Any time two or more items are close together, we tend to group them together, even if there is no relationship between them
- **Similarity:** We often group elements together because they are similar to one another in shape, size, color and see them as parts of a whole rather than as unique individuals
- **Constancy:** We rarely change our perception of a person or thing once we have established a particular perception.

In order to understand the relation between the principles of perception and their job as an observer of the behavior of residents, consider a typical situation. YDA Green arrives at work and begins to receive stimuli - the youth and workers there. He automatically begins to organize or sort the stimuli - he groups the youth, focusing first on individuals or figures in the group, the ground, and then looks at the larger picture, the field. Those who are closest together are the ones he will assume to be together and those who are closest to him are the ones he will interact with first. Those whom he tends to like the most are the ones who are

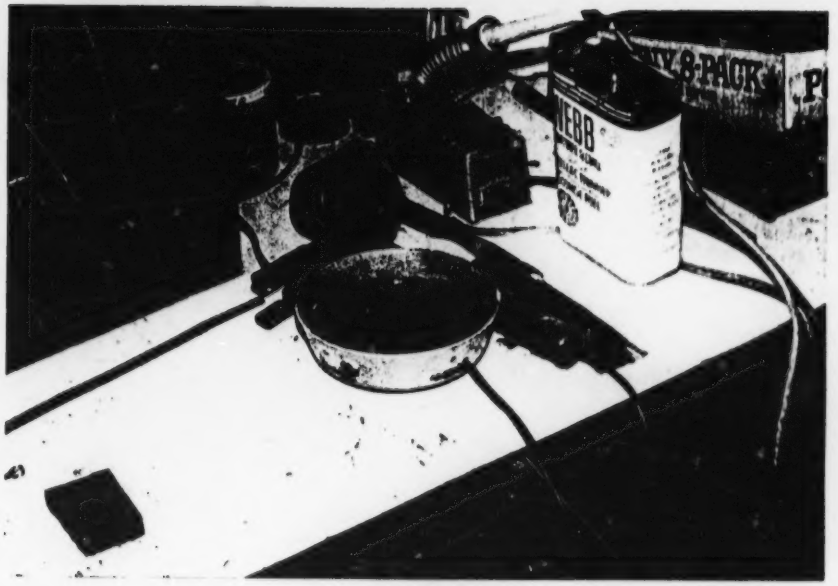
similar to him. He will react to many youth in the same way as before because of perceptual constancy. And finally, he will begin to settle into his routine once he has organized all the stimuli into a meaningful whole -- thus experiencing closure.

A Rationale

As this illustrates, perceptions about people may determine relations and communications with them. And yet perceptions are far from infallible. The more skilled staff are in general perception, the more skilled they will become in person perception, and therefore the better they can become in interpreting the messages in the environment and understanding and predicting the behavior of residents.

Observation and perception are active processes in which staff actively select, organize, and interpret behavior. This process has an impact on the way in which they will think about and behave towards residents. They can perceive only part of the available stimuli while filtering out other through both physiological and psychological filters. Teaching them to use safety and security as their filters is invaluable.

#1



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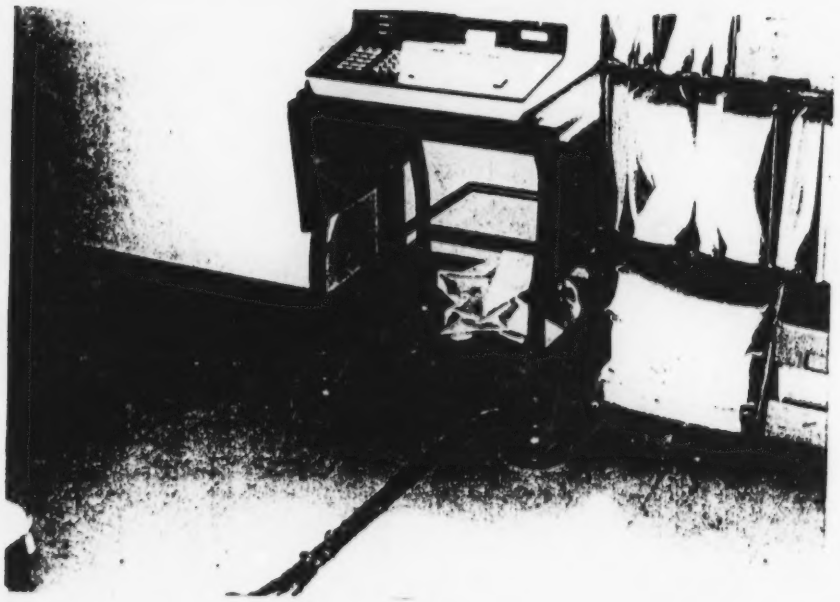

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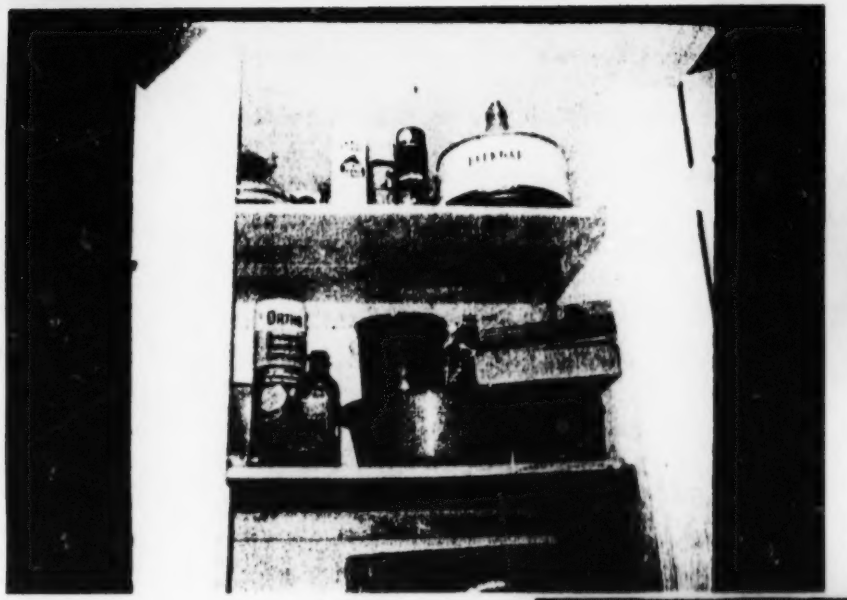

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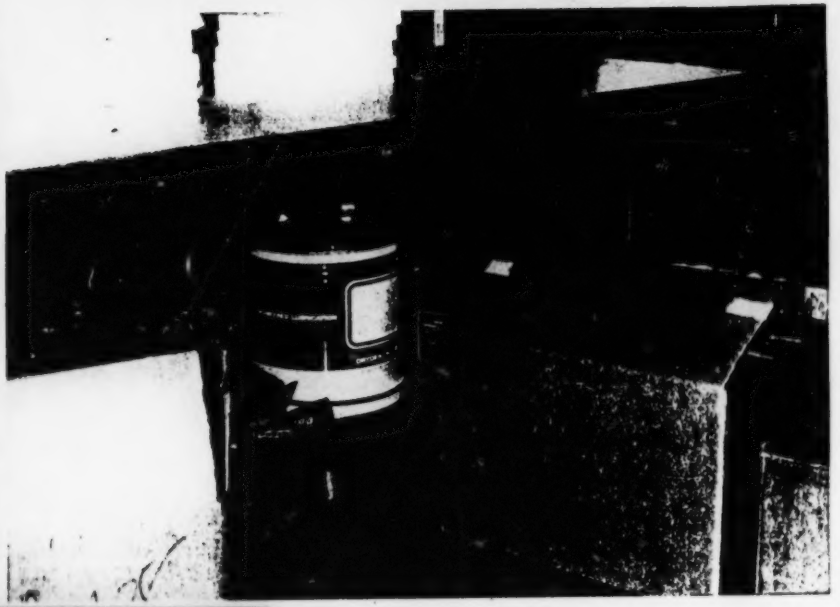

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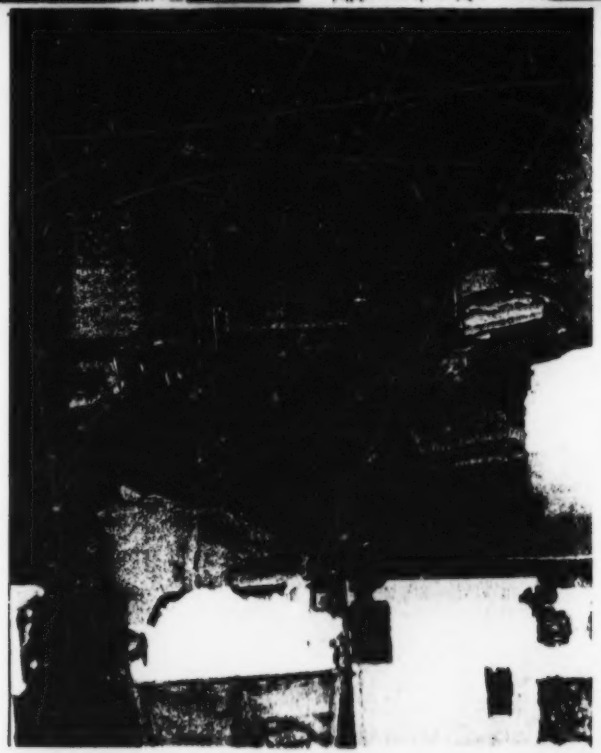

#7

ACTIVITY: Observing Environmental Factors, Answer Key

- Paper on wall exceeds some fire code requirements. Boxes on floor.
- Improperly stored flammables. Unlabeled containers of liquids. Soldering irons and other electrical equipment left in proximity to possible flammables. Soldering irons not stored in locked cabinet.
- Taped electrical cord on floor.
- Flammable boxes stored near other flammables and electrics.
- Possibly flammable cover on cord.
- Four extension cords on outlet.
- Boxes near outlet.
- Improperly stored toxics. Possibly an unmarked flammable container. Possible flammables not stored in vented flammable cabinet.
- Flammable container not in flammables cabinet. Flammable container located near other flammables. If vessel, containers may be incorrectly labeled. Boxes on floor may block exit.
- Fire exit blocked with trash and laundry; should be kept clear at all times.

ACTIVITY: Strategies and Guidelines for Observing

Some Suggestions

---

1. Tell what you observed.
2. Pass on info ASAP to a co-worker.
3. Make a log entry as soon after the observation as possible.
4. Have a partner/co-worker review the log entry.
5. Take out a piece of paper and write down some memory joggers.
6. Have kids write down what they saw.
7. Don't rely on just your recall/observation; have your co-workers write also.
8. Ask yourself, are these: feelings, thoughts, observations
9.
10.
11.
12.

AN INTRODUCTION TO NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

All nonverbal cues -- body movements, facial expressions, gestures, posture, clothing, hair style and color, closeness, etc. -- convey meaning. They can convey some of the most potent messages that residents send. However, they can also be manipulated or misinterpreted, leading to erroneous conclusions that could interfere with staff relationship with and behavior toward residents as well as the safety and security of the facility. Therefore it is of value to explore this topic with staff.

Nonverbal messages can be classified as intentional or symbolic and non-intentional or symptomatic. Learning to observe both is important in order to understand and predict residents' behavior.

Non-intentional messages are movements and other cues that are not intentionally displayed as a sign or symbol. For example, the way a resident walks, sits, stands, the way he/she dresses are more often just symptomatic of long-term habits or a present state of mind. They contain no clearly intended message. It is important to observe these because they can reveal the tone or emotional state of individual residents or groups or unit.

More often than not, residents' non-verbal messages are intentional and highly symbolic. For example, the use of certain colors or styles of dress and grooming are carefully selected and intentionally displayed to signify a clearly defined message that is understood by the group or unit or facility. It is these messages that make up the "lexicon" of non-verbal language in a facility and that the new YDA needs to learn quickly to help preserve safety and security. Missing or misinterpreting some of these messages could be dangerous.

Such a list as gathered from experienced YDAs appears below:

Resident Nonverbal Cues: Intentional?

slap chest and lean forward	You got a problem?
slap chest and reach out to other	You got a problem?
hand in face	You got a problem?
bop walk; grabbing crotch	street wise; with it
two fingers forward	handshake substitute; gun
hand blade across neck	cut it out
pant leg up	sign of being gay
pants down with boxers out	I'm with it
scarfs; on head; hanging out of back pocket; on ankles	Implies gang association
layered clothing	may fight; may escape; sign of an abused kid; concealing something (weapon, contraband, etc.)
using Vaseline	ready to fight
band-aid on face	getting over on staff; fuck you, staff
bending over (to tie shoes)	Kiss my ass
slamming chest, hands	Want some of this?
two-finger kiss	Word to mother

Nonverbal Communication

sucking teeth
clearing throat
smiling
hesitancy
open palm
sitting up
hissing
no eye contact
barking
intimidation with eyes
first impression
shake hand
space
comfort
reflection of your attitude
your presentation
change

PARTICIPANT MATERIALS

FOR

OBSERVATION SKILLS

G:\WORKSP\CPE\LITERACY\CURRIC\CVRPGS

ACTIVITY: How Observant Are You?

Purpose: To increase your observation skills.

Directions: Write in the space below all of your observations of this room and its contents since you entered it. Do not allow your eyes to leave this page from this point until you complete your writing. Your observations should be from memory only. Pay special attention to those elements in the environment that would be a safety and security risk if you were in a residential facility. You will be given 3 minutes to complete this task. Use the back of this page as well as the space below to write your observations.

OBSERVATIONS

Observing for a Safe Environment

Contraband

1. Contraband at all facilities shall include, but need not necessarily be limited to, the following items:
   - * firearms (hand guns, shoulder guns, modified firearms)
   - simulated firearms including toy weapons which appear as weapons
   - ammunition
   - knives
   - weapons of any sort
   - * explosives or any article which can cause death or serious injury
   - * marijuana
   - * illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia (specialized pipes and cigarette papers, syringes, hypodermic needles, etc.)
   - unauthorized beverages
   - alcoholic beverages
   - * fireworks
   - starting pistols
   - sums of cash beyond permissible facility limits (applicable only to residents)
   - credit cards (applicable only to residents)
   - tobacco products (applicable only to residents)

   * items that are illegal

2. Each facility shall develop a list of items considered contraband for that facility. Such list shall include the above items as well as other items the facility considers to be contraband. This list cannot be nor is it intended to be exhaustive. This fact should be made clear to both residents and staff.

   The facility contraband list shall be submitted for approval to central office facility management.

Common Flammable, Toxic, and Caustic Substances

Flammable Substances (i.e., Substances that are easily set on fire):

Class I Liquids:

- Gasoline
- Benzine (Petroleum Ether)
- Acetone
- Hexanan
- Lacquer
- Lacquer Thinner
- Denatured Alcohol
- Ethyl Alcohol
- Xylene (Xylol)
- Contact Cement (Flammable)
- Toludi (Toluene)
- Methyl Ethyl Ether
- Methyl Ethyl Ketone
- Naphtha Y, M, & P

Class II Liquids:

- Diesel Fuel
- Motor Oil
- Kerosene
- Cleaning Solvents
- Mineral Spirits
- Agitene

Class III Liquids

- Paints (Oil Base)
- Linseed Oil
- Mineral Oil
- Neatsfoot Oil
- Sunray Conditioner
- Guardian Fluid

Toxic Substances (i.e. Substances that are poisonous when ingested):

- Ammonia
- Chlorine
- Antifreeze
- Duplicating Fluid
- Methyl Alcohol (Wood Alcohol or Methanol)
- Defoliants
- Herbicides
- Pesticides
- Rodenticides

Caustic Substances (i.e. Substances that can burn, eat away, or destroy living tissue on contact):

- Lye
- Muriatic Acid
- Caustic Soda
- Sulfuric Acid
- Tannic Acid

Housekeeping and Fire Safety Guidelines

Good housekeeping is common sense. Staff who are sensitized to the relationship between good housekeeping and fire prevention, can provide a constant lookout for hazardous conditions. The following guidelines can help:

Allow smoking only in approved areas; use non-tip, non-combustible receptacles for ashes and butts. Empty ashtrays only when ashes, matches, and butts are cold; empty them into metal containers .

Watch for burnspots on bedding or furniture, and report immediately.

Watch out for cracked, split, or hot cords, loose outlets, broken switches, and overloaded outlets.

Protect extension cords from damage; watch for cords running across doorways or anywhere they can be chaffed or stepped on. Cords should never be run under rugs or taped down.

Extension cords should not be plugged into another, and more than one extension cord should not be plugged into an outlet.

Heat producing appliances should be kept away from anything that might burn. Plenty of space should be left for air to circulate around equipment that normally gives off heat.

Turn off electrical equipment when not in use.

Unplug and repair appliances that give off smoke, fumes, or cause tingling sensations.

Combustibles such as paper, linens, and clothing should be kept away from heat sources, even reading lamps.

Make sure that corridors, staircases, and exits are clear and properly lighted at all times. They should not be used for storage, even temporarily.

Make sure that exit signs are present and that the lights work.

Immediately report loose door handles, latch problems, or faulty locks.

Keep storage areas neat and clean.

Make sure evacuation plans are posted.

Make sure laundry areas are free of lint and dust. Frequently check lint screens.

Keep stoves, ovens, vent hoods, filters, and ducts free of grease and build-up. Check pilot lights frequently to insure proper operation.

Store flammable liquids and rags used for flammable liquids in specially designed, approved cabinets away from ignition sources.

Make sure fire protection equipment such as extinguishers, standpipes, alarms, detectors, sprinkler heads and phones are clear of obstruction.

Keep areas clean; report any buildup of trash and debris. Trash and debris should be removed daily, stored in safe and approved containers, and at a safe location.

Vocational areas should be cleared on a regular basis. Areas that accumulate dust should be kept cleaned thoroughly, and waste stored in approved containers.

Storage or accumulation of waste, rubbish, old furniture, opened paint and other combustibles should be properly disposed of or surplused.

NOTE: **This list is only a guide. Items may need to be added or deleted based upon the needs of your facility.**

ACTIVITY: Observing Environmental Factors

Purpose: To build observation skills.

Directions: You will be looking at pictures of facilities. Observe them closely, taking notes below on what you think are safety or security problems.

Photo #1:

Photo #2:

Photo #3:

Photo #4:

Photo #5:

Photo #6:

Photo #7:

ACTIVITY: Observing Human Factors

Purpose: To practice observation and recording skills using a workplace situation. To distinguish between observations, thoughts, and feelings.

Directions: You will be observing a videotape of a workplace situation involving staff and youth. Assume you are the staff member on duty and closely observe the elements of the situation. Record your information on the attached Observation Sheet.

1. The first time the video is shown, watch and observe the way the youths behave. Notice how they move, gesture, stand, sit, sound, dress, etc. Jot down your observations on it in the left column of your observation sheet. Share your notes with the group.
2. The second time the video is shown, observe closely, and record any additional observations. In addition, record your interpretations and feelings about the behavior you observe in the right column.

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt *(interpretations and opinions)*

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt (*interpretations and opinions*)

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt (*interpretations and opinions*)

ACTIVITY: Acting Out

Purpose: To practice the proposed strategies and guidelines for observing and recording residents' behaviors in facility incidents.

Directions: Players: Think of a problem situation from the facility in which observation by staff was important in understanding and being prepared for the event. Assign roles to your small group members, prepare your roles including the non-verbal behaviors and environmental areas. Then, act out the event in front of the large group. The group will be observing and recording.

Observers: Carefully note on your observation sheets what you observe. Be careful to distinguish between what you observe and what you think and feel.

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt (*interpretations and opinions*)

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt (*interpretations and opinions*)

Observation Sheet

What you observed *(behaviors)*	What you thought and felt (*interpretations and opinions*)

ACTIVITY: Summary and Closure: Observation Skills

Purpose: To provide an opportunity to share your learnings with other staff; to build your Personal Progress Portfolio; to create closure to the session.

Directions: Pair up with another group member for this activity. First, discuss the questions below and share your thoughts with your partner. After your discussion, write your thoughts below. When you are done, put this page in your Personal Progress Portfolio.

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1. What did you learn?

2. How can you apply it to your job?

3. What can you do to improve skills?

Additional Materials and Resources

If your agency decides to implement the *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills* curriculum, the additional materials that you could request from Rockefeller College include:

- *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills Assessment* video tape

Used to conduct the assessment process described in the curriculum modules, **Orientation** and **Final Assessment**, as well as to deliver the **Observation** and **Decision Making** modules, the video simulates incidents from actual juvenile justice facilities that a direct care worker might encounter at the work site. After viewing, the participant completes a series of workplace tasks that draws on skills from observation through documentation.

- *Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring* and its accompanying *Affiliate Administrator's Guide*

The Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring and The Administrator's Guide are guides to help Literacy Volunteers of America in developing contextualized tutoring programs for trainees who complete the *Essentials* curriculum and are in need of further educational assistance. Both guides were developed for this project but can be adapted to other workplaces. LVA is a nationwide volunteer program, providing tutors at no cost to individuals who are desirous of increasing their skill in reading and writing. The appendices of these guides include a list of valuable resources for anyone interested in pursuing the subject of contextualized instruction and workplace literacy.

- *Staff Decisions* videotape

Available from the New York State Division for Youth, Bureau of Staff Development and Training, for a small fee, this videotape of simulated workplace incidents can be used as a basis for exploring the decision making process instructed in the **Decision Making** module.

ORDER FORM

Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program
Professional Development Program
Rockefeller College
University at Albany
State University of New York
Richardson Hall, Room 381
135 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12222

Attn: Staff, **Rockefeller College Workplace Literacy Program**
Telephone: (518) 442-5422
Fax: (518) 442-5768

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

- ☐ *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills* Assessment Videotape
- ☐ *Guide to Contextualized Workplace Tutoring for Volunteer Tutors*
- ☐ *Administrator's Guide to Implementing Contextualized Workplace Tutoring*
- ☐ Additional copy of the *Essential Communication and Documentation Skills* curriculum

Ship Material To

Name

Title

Agency

Address

Phone:

Comments

NYS DIVISION FOR YOUTH

ORDER FORM

Description of Material

"Staff Decisions" **Videotape Training Program and Facilitator's Manual (VHS only)**

Cost: $ 25.00 (includes shipping and handling)

Payment Information

☐ Postal Money Order ☐ Cashier's Check ☐ Voucher/Purchase Order (Enclosed)

Quantity: _____

Payment: $_____ (Enclosed)

Make Payable and Send To:

NYS DIVISION FOR YOUTH
Attention: Bureau of Staff Development & Training
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

For Additional Information contact: Margaret W. Davis (518) 473-4474

Ship Material To:

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